

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE
Transcriber's Office

March 25, 1998 LB 395, 1209
 LR 428-441

have items for the record?

CLERK: I do, Madam President. A confirmation report from Retirement Systems; hearing notice from Natural Resources; Senator Robak, an amendment to LB 1209. Study resolutions, (read brief summaries of LR 428-441). (See pages 1396-1404 of the Legislative Journal.)

Next amendment to LB 395, Senator Preister, AM3279, Senator. (See page 991 of the Legislative Journal.)

SENATOR CROSBY: Senator Preister.

SENATOR PREISTER: Thank you, Honorable President. I would like to state to the body that although I have a couple of other amendments and to Senator Kristensen who may be talking to somebody else and not listening that what I would like to do is try one last amendment. This amendment up or down is when I see the votes may be one that I can get by the body. Basically this amendment says that government will be taken out of it. If we're going to try this experiment, if we're going to let the businesses do it, let's hold government to a little higher standard. Let's have government entities, basically us, allow our information, government information is public information as it is. But government agencies are currently included in this. Somehow, that seems to create a kind of...I don't even know for sure what to describe it, but some kind of a conflict where on one hand we're required to do disclosure to the public, we are the public, and yet we are going to keep more information secret from the public? This amendment would basically strike governmental and political subdivisions from the definition of person who can do the environmental audit. The argument given for the bill itself is protections to keep the information from the public so it would not be used against the public or the regulated entity in litigation. Well, if the public is going to sue government, that's a whole different situation. We, I think, should be in a different position. I think it's appropriate and right to hold our governmental entities to that higher standard than we may be doing to the private sector. This issue I believe is just good accountability in government. When the public is asking for their own government information to be available, do we then set the example and say we're going